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3rd meeting
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at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.50 p.m.

ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

1. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) nominated Mr. Mahbub Kabir (Bangladesh) for the office of Rapporteur of the Committee.

2. The CHAIRMAN, noting that there were no other candidates, suggested that the Committee dispense with voting by secret ballot.

3. It was so decided.

4. Mr. Mahbub Kabir (Bangladesh) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

OTHER MATTERS

5. Mrs. WELLS (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) observed that many delegations were concerned about the potential impact of the economy measures announced by the Secretary-General with regard to conference services. Some clarifications therefore were in order. The President of the General Assembly had addressed a letter to the Secretary-General taking note of the communications on the matter which had been received from delegations. She soon would be meeting with the President of the General Assembly to try to clarify the situation. As to documents distributed to delegations, she invited all missions to reconsider how many copies they needed. It should be possible, without any particular difficulty, to provide a small number of copies (approximately five per document) to Member States. However, 14 countries had requested more than 20 copies of each document, and in some cases, even 150 had been requested. It was absolutely impossible for the Secretariat to satisfy such requests. Those countries in particular were invited to use the optical disc system which was now operational. Letters had been sent to missions early in September drawing their attention to the new system. It was essential to reduce the amount of paper used.

6. With regard to meetings, the President of the General Assembly had drawn the attention of all the Main Committees to the need to cooperate closely and to bear in mind the interdependence of various agenda items. The Office of Conference Services, for its part, would work in close collaboration with Committee secretaries to ensure that the required services were provided. Cooperation between the Secretariat and the Committees was a gauge of success. For example, if a meeting was cancelled, the Office of Conference Services should be informed early enough to be able to reallocate the resources to other Committees. In return, she would bring the concerns expressed by delegations to the attention of the Secretary-General.

7. Mr. BOIN (France) said that his delegation obviously was sensitive to appeals to eliminate waste and also understood the reasons which prompted the Under-Secretary-General to request the assistance of Member States. However, consideration might be given to applying a criterion for determining the number of copies provided to missions, namely, whether Member States paid their contributions to the Organization. In other words, a Member State which was in arrears would be entitled to only two copies. Secondly, the economy measures

(Mr. Boin, France)

suggested by the Secretary-General should be put in perspective. Those measures would result in a reduction in expenditure on the order of $4 million to $6 million. That was a paltry sum considering that the arrears responsible for the financial crisis amounted to more than $2 billion. It also should be noted that the economy measures were unfair to Member States which paid their contributions on time. They directly violated many General Assembly resolutions, particularly with regard to the principle of equal treatment of the official languages. Moreover, while it was true that such measures would result in short-term savings, as a result of the quota for conference services, those same services necessarily would be overused later, since the Assembly would have to be reconvened in 1994. In reality, the so-called "economy" measures did not resolve the underlying problems and were, moreover, unfair to Member States that were not in arrears.

8. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that it was his impression that the two-copy limit for the distribution of documents had been cancelled and that missions could obtain a reasonable number of copies determined by the number of users. He was pleased, since his delegation had feared that the Committee's work would suffer if documentation was inadequate. Having said that, he wondered whether the other "economy" measures were still in effect. If the financial crisis was real, why had the Secretary-General decided to adopt measures which complicated the work of Member States? Excessive expenditures by the Secretariat just as easily could be limited, for example, by eliminating the more than 40-per-cent-increase in per diem allowances paid to upper-level officials, or by an across-the-board reduction in the salaries of assistant secretaries-general and under-secretaries-general. In the view of his delegation, the economy measures had an implicit objective: to underscore the financial difficulties and single out a number of Member States. In that connection, it would like the Secretariat to indicate how many States would have to settle for two copies if the arrears criterion was applied, as the representative of France had suggested. The number of Member States which were up to date in their contributions payments had increased substantially in recent weeks. However, his delegation was certain that the proposal by France was not directed against a particular country and that it was addressed to the majority of Member States.

9. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) said that, if he had correctly understood the statement by the Under-Secretary-General, the measures taken by the Secretary-General would be re-examined. He would appreciate a confirmation in that regard, as well as on the nature of the measures in question. They appeared to be tied to a particular financial situation, which had been described as a "financial crisis". He wondered whether that meant that they were provisional in nature. However, economy measures also had been adopted in 1985 and 1986, and apparently still were in effect.

10. Mrs. WELLS (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management), replying to the points raised by several delegations, said that in his statement in August to the Fifth Committee on the economy measures, the Secretary-General had indicated that the measures had been prompted by the financial difficulties facing the Organization. Implicit in his statement had been the assumption that the measures would be reconsidered if the situation improved. With regard to earlier economy measures, a reply would be given later to the representative of

(Mrs. Wells)

Cuba. Lastly, with regard to the question raised by the United States representative, it was her impression that, as of two or three days earlier, 13 Member States had been up to date on their contribution payments.

11. Mr. BOIN (France) said that that figure was unrelated to the question posed. That figure referred to the number of Member States which had been able to pay everything that they owed to the Organization. It also was necessary to take into account recent appeals for funds which currently were being processed, particularly with respect to peace-keeping operations. Moreover, the Financial Regulations allowed for delays in the payment of contributions: a 30-day period for contributions to the regular budget, and an additional period of approximately 10 months before contributions were declared to be in arrears, in the legal and financial sense of the word. If the arrears criterion was used, that was the definition that should apply. In 1992, the representative of Japan had been upset that his country had been included among the traditional debtors. His own delegation today expressed the same feeling. It was important not to confuse countries which traditionally had a poor payment record with Member States which were not in arrears but which owed the Organization certain sums as a result of recent appeals for funds.

12. Mr. TAKASU (Comptroller) said that as at mid-September, approximately 60 countries had paid their contributions to the regular budget.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (continued) (A/48/250 and Add.1; A/C.5/48/6; A/C.5/48/L.1)

13. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.5/48/6 containing the list of agenda items allocated to the Fifth Committee. The President of the General Assembly drew attention in that document to the recommendations on the organization of the session contained in section II of the report of the General Committee (A/48/250) as well as to the recommendation concerning the agenda of the Main Committees contained in section IV (para. 39) of that report. In implementation of those recommendations, meetings with services would be limited to those that could be serviced within the regular personnel establishment. That meant no more than 63 meetings a week with services. Ten meetings a week would be kept for the Security Council and 53 meetings for the General Assembly. There would be little possibility of servicing informal consultations or working groups, or meetings of regional or other groups of Member States. It was thus more important than ever to make optimum use of available conference services.

14. The Chairman pointed out that the deadline of 1 December had been set for the submission of all draft resolutions having financial implications to the Fifth Committee. The Committee should, as a general practice, consider accepting without debate the recommendations of ACABQ on the financial implications of draft resolutions up to a prescribed limit, namely, $25,000 on any one item.

15. The Chairman recommended to all delegations that they should familiarize themselves with section II of document A/48/250 and also with the provisions of General Assembly decision 34/401 relating to the rationalization of the procedures and organization of the work of the General Assembly. With regard to the working methods of the Committee, he proposed continuing to follow the usual practices, ie.: the list of speakers for each of the principal items should be

(The Chairman)

closed no later than 48 hours after the introduction the item in question; statements would be heard in the order in which the delegations had been included in the list of speakers; and the Rapporteur would be authorized to report directly to the General Assembly on all questions whose examination had been completed, unless, in a specific case, the Committee decided to include a summary of the debate in its report.

16. The Chairman said he would take it that the Committee wished to proceed in the manner he had just outlined.

17. It was so decided.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that the programme of work in drawing up a number of factors had been taken into account, such as the availability of documentation. He drew attention to the note by the Secretariat relating to the status of documentation of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/48/L.1).

19. The Fifth Committee would begin its substantive work on 20 October, somewhat before the end of the session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), it being understood that the meetings of the two bodies would not overlap. At that time, the Fifth Committee would hear a statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management covering most of the items on its agenda, in particular the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization, the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the improvement of the financial situation and the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations. A general debate would follow, lasting approximately two weeks. It was understood that the Committee might, if necessary, decide to revert to the question of the improvement of the financial situation. Also on October 20, item 127 (scale of assessments) would be introduced to the Committee. The debate on that question should not last more than two weeks, inasmuch as the bulk of the work would be done in informal meetings.

20. In the light of the discussion which the Committee had had on the question of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the Bureau recommended that the Committee should begin its consideration of the item on 15 November. The item would remain under consideration until the end of the session. He requested all delegations to cooperate in avoiding any unnecessary delay. Needless to say, that would mean additional efforts on the part of the Secretariat, ACABQ, CPC and delegations.

21. As to matters connected with the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 that had been deferred until the forty-eighth session, the Chairman suggested that the Committee should take them up at the beginning of the week of 25 October. The Committee would begin its consideration of the pattern of conferences (item 126) on 29 October. The general debate, which should not last more than a week, would begin on 1 November.

22. In view of the status of documentation on items 128 (United Nations common system) and 129 (United Nations pension system), the Committee would not be able to take up those two items until 5 November. The ensuing debate should not last more than two weeks.

(The Chairman)

23. The Committee would take up the item concerning the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations (item 138) during the week of 15 November.

24. He suggested that the Fifth Committee should proceed to the appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments (item 17) towards the end of November. In the meantime, a time-limit should be suggested for submitting candidacies.

25. He drew the attention of members to three items which the General Assembly might have to refer to the Fifth Committee on the recommendation of the General Committee: the financing of United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia, the mission to be set up in Haiti and the observer mission to be deployed on the frontier between Uganda and Rwanda.

26. In conclusion, he said that if the economy measures announced by the Secretary-General were not lifted within a very short time, at least as far as the Fifth Committee was concerned, there was no chance that it could carry out its work in an acceptable way.

27. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that he fully appreciated the efforts made by the officers of the Committee to cope with an exceptional situation and his delegation approved, on the whole, the solutions they proposed. However, while admitting that a time-limit must be set for the submission of candidacies for the subsidiary organs, he hoped that the date proposed for the actual appointments was intended to serve purely as a guideline. Furthermore, inasmuch as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had said the day before that his Committee would be unable to submit its report before the end of the year, it would be difficult to begin the debate on the budget as early as 15 November. The ACABQ report was in fact one of the most important documents submitted to the Fifth Committee, and the Advisory Committee should not be pressured into preparing it too hastily, for that would adversely affect its quality, its rigour and its exhaustiveness.

28. The Fifth Committee should likewise not rush to approve the proposed programme budget to such an extent that it was unable to apply the provisions of resolution 41/213. The United States delegation, while recognizing that every delegation had the right to request a vote on any item on the agenda, would like the Committee to be able to continue to take its decisions by consensus, particularly on budgetary matters. The shortage of time, finally, was liable to prevent delegations from making proposals based on the proposed programme budget or the Advisory Committee recommendations. Thus, the United States would find it very difficult to agree to begin the debate on 15 November, unless the delegations concerned were expected, in the meantime, to agree on a number of principles that would guarantee that the Fifth Committee would be able to play its role fully.

29. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom), assuming that the measures announced at the previous meeting would remain in force until the end of the session, asked how many meetings with conference services were planned for the Fifth Committee and for the Advisory Committee. Given the deplorable situation revealed by document A/C.5/48/L.1 on the status of documentation, the United Kingdom delegation would

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also like to know whether the estimated dates of issue indicated were those on which the documents were to be distributed in the original language or in all languages, since a difference of 5 to 10 days might be involved. His delegation also wondered whether the Advisory Committee had been consulted regarding the date of issue of its reports, inasmuch as some of the dates indicated seemed more optimistic than realistic. To take only one example, the note of the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Independent Advisory Group on United Nations Financing had been announced for the beginning of October: leaving aside the fact that the report in question, the implications of which were considerable, had been in the public domain for eight or nine months and that the covering note could have been drafted earlier, very little time would thus be left for the Fifth Committee to arrive at and formulate its recommendations before the end of the same month.

30. The Committee was entirely without realistic and reliable data on which to take decisions on its programme of work. Inasmuch as it was equally impossible for it to wait until its next meeting - scheduled for three weeks later - in order to do so, it would have to meet in the interim and take a decision on the question of the economy measures that had been announced on the basis of information provided by the Secretary-General.

31. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) asked whether it was due to a clerical error that the tentative programme of work showed item 17 as being taken up in late November or early December, when the officers of the Committee had decided that very morning that the appointments to fill vacancies in the subsidiary organs and other appointments would take place the first week of November.

32. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) hoped that there had been no error, considering that the elections should take place as late as possible in order to be as democratic as possible. He supported the recommendation of the Bureau as reflected in the document circulated to members.

33. The tentative timetable for consideration of the proposed programme budget was sound and all the parties would have to make the necessary efforts, given the situation, to enable the Committee to adhere to it. As to the very important question that had been put to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the work of the Fifth Committee, the Cuban delegation wanted the Advisory Committee itself to work out an answer, after consultation among all its members.

34. Mr. BOIN (France) said that it was essential for the Committee to be able to devote itself exclusively to the budget from 15 November onwards, without having a large number of outstanding agenda items; while it was conceivable that consideration of certain items of particular political or financial importance might not be concluded before the end of the session, there could be no justification for that practice in all cases. On the other hand, since it seemed quite impossible for the Committee to be able to deal in depth with all the issues on its tentative programme of work, it might be well advised to remove from the agenda a number of items which were not of vital importance and which, in the circumstances, it could dispense with debating. In the interests of efficiency, the Committee could similarly decide not to take up issues, even

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those as important as the financing of peace-keeping operations, which had been extensively covered elsewhere and which could be taken up again at a resumed session.

35. Turning to a point of detail regarding the organization of work, he pointed out that it was proposed that consideration of the item on the pattern of conferences would start on 29 October, while the Committee on Conferences would meet only on 25 and 26 October; that would not leave sufficient time for the preparation and consideration of its report.

36. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that he shared the views expressed by the representative of France. He added that certain items which were not urgent, such as agenda item 17, could with advantage be deferred until December. On the other hand, his delegation did not see how the Committee could undertake a discussion of the proposed programme budget without having studied the report of ACABQ.

37. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) felt that the Committee should start its work as soon as possible and should endeavour to complete consideration of as many items as possible before devoting itself more or less exclusively to consideration of the budget. To that end, consideration of item 120 could be brought forward to the week of 8 November, since all the reports on the financial statements would be available at the end of October. For the same reasons, it would be preferable to deal with the question of appointments (item 17) as early as possible, for example, at the beginning of November.

38. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) asked whether the dotted lines in the tentative programme of work represented periods of informal consultation. In view of the exceptional circumstances, he stressed the need to exercise great discipline during the general debate, which should not be allowed to extend over four weeks: delegations which were not ready to speak when their turn came should forfeit it. Having said that, he felt that the proposed programme of work was acceptable, provided it was considered as tentative and was followed with the utmost flexibility. Much would depend on the dates on which ACABQ actually presented its reports. It could be counted upon to be efficient and to make exceptional efforts to cope with an abnormal situation. He hoped that its reports would be ready on time, otherwise the Committee would be forced, against its will, to start the debate without the benefit of its recommendations.

39. The programming of item 124 should undoubtedly be revised by the Bureau: as things stood, consideration of the improvement of the financial situation of the organization was scheduled for the week of 18 to 22 October, while the report of ACABQ was not expected until the end of October; the representative of the United Kingdom had already drawn attention to that problem. By the same token, the confusion over item 17 created by some of the previous statements should be cleared up. With those reservations, Ghana supported the recommendation by the Bureau.

40. Mr. CLAVIJO (Colombia) pointed out that the programme of work, was only tentative and could be revised several times during the course of the session. It would be advisable to begin consideration of the four items mentioned by the Chairman during the first week, to bring forward consideration of item 120, as suggested by the representative of Austria, and to do likewise with items 12 and 17, so that the Committee could embark at the earliest possible opportunity on its consideration of the proposed programme budget. In that connection, his delegation wondered whether, in view of the urgency of the matter ACABQ might be able to speed up its work.

41. Mr. BIDNYI (Russian Federation) also stressed the tentative nature of the programme of work and said that many points required clarification before consideration of the proposed programme budget could begin. The Committee should have a clear idea of its objectives and of the volume of work it faced. He wondered how m any official and informal meetings would be available to the Committee and to ACABQ and said that it would be useful to know what the situation had been in that regard in 1991, the previous budget year, so that a realistic decision could be taken on the matter. With regard to the consideration of item 17, the alternatives where either not to set a date, or, as at the forty-seventh session, to consider some appointments immediately and to defer others until the end of the session. In any event, it was important to take up first items which could be considered swiftly and to exercise flexibility.

42. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that the Committee should not spend too much time on the programme of work. His delegation would be prepared to begin discussing the proposed programme budget on 15 November and it hoped that the Committee would be able to reach a decision on that matter during the current meeting. He noted that the Committee had always adopted its programme of work in the knowledge that subsequent modifications would be possible. With regard to the number of meetings devoted to consideration of the proposed programme budget, he did not see the purpose of a comparison with the forty-sixth session; that approach was too bureaucratic. Nevertheless, it was advisable to limit the length of the debate and he pointed out that meetings should begin punctually. He shared the view of the Austrian delegation that consideration of item 120 could be brought forward and suggested that items 125, 126, 128, 129 and 163 should be deferred until December or the first quarter of 1994. As for item 17, he believed that the matter should be decided as soon as possible to enable new members to participate without delay in the work of the Committee.

43. Mr. ONWUALIA (Nigeria) said he had no objection to most of the dates proposed in the tentative programme of work. As his was a small delegation, however, he noted with concern that the work of the Committee and that of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) would overlap from 20 to 24 October. In addition, he felt it would be difficult to consider the proposed programme budget without knowing the views of ACABQ and he asked whether it was true that the Advisory Committee's report would not be ready before the end of the year and whether that of CPC would appear on the scheduled date. In his opinion, it would be advisable to go ahead with appointments to fill vacancies before beginning consideration of the proposed programme budget.

44. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) said she believed that, if everyone made an effort, the exceptional problems faced by the Committee during its current session could be overcome. In that connection, she urged delegations to be punctual. She agreed to 15 November as the date on which consideration of the proposed programme budget should begin and hoped that the appointments would take place as swiftly as possible.

45. Mrs. ICHIKAWA (Japan) said that her delegation shared the hope expressed by Austria that consideration of the financial reports (item 120) could be brought forward slightly. In addition, she suggested that the item might be considered at the earliest possible date in October, in conjunction with items 121 (Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations) and 124 (Improving the financial situation of the United Nations), stressing the interconnection between the three issues, and that item 127 (Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations) should be taken up a week or two later. With reference to item 138 (Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations), she said that the greater part of the work should be carried out during the resumed session, although some aspects would have to be dealt with during the current session since they were closely linked to item 124. In that context, she stressed the importance of the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund and hoped that the relevant documentation would be submitted as soon as possible. With regard to the Volcker/Ogata report on the financing of the United Nations, which would be submitted under item 124, she hoped that, in view of the important recommendations which it contained, it would be issued without delay. As for consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, her delegation was prepared, for the present, to accept 15 November, the date proposed by the Bureau, for the beginning of the general debate. She stressed the importance of the work which CPC would have to carry out in October and asked the Secretariat to do everything in its power to ensure that the necessary documentation was submitted in good time.

46. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) said that the tentative programme of work was entirely realistic and that the Committee should adopt it on a provisional basis, subject to modification following the issuance of the relevant documents. The Bureau could, however, consider certain adjustments, such as the deferment of consideration of the report of the Committee on Conferences, scheduled for the end of October, since it was highly unlikely that the necessary documentation would be available in the time required.

47. In addition, he asked why no date had been proposed for consideration of the financing of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and two other peace-keeping operations, why more time had to be allocated for the consideration of item 121 than for that of the proposed programme budget, and why so much time had to be given to the consideration of item 124.

48. The date suggested for consideration of the proposed programme budget should be brought forward and, to that end, the Secretariat should make an extra effort to ensure the timely publication of the relevant documents. The Committee might also consider certain sections of the budget, even without the

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benefit of the Advisory Committee's recommendations. The extraordinary situation which the Committee faced demanded innovative and flexible solutions and he proposed that ACABQ and CPC should be asked to convene a joint meeting to consider the various sections of the proposed programme budget and to submit a joint report thereon.

49. He urged all delegations to cooperate to ensure the success of the Committee's work.

50. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), referring to the various questions that had been put about the Committee's meetings, said that during the previous budget year, two years earlier, the Committee had held a total of 123 meetings, of which 37 had been devoted to budgetary questions. In 1992, it had held 130 meetings, including a larger number of informal meetings than in 1991. The total number of meetings planned for the current session was 85, the reduction being due to the cost-saving measures that had been decreed. That figure could, however, be revised upwards, if necessary.

51. Mr. ACAKPO-SATCHIVI (Secretary of the Committee), replying to the question put by the French delegation concerning the pattern of conferences, said that the Bureau had proposed that consideration of the report of the Committee on Conferences should begin on 1 November 1993.

52. As for the questions raised by the Moroccan delegation concerning the financing of various peace-keeping operations, no date had yet been proposed since the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit reports by the end of January 1994. Replying to the question put by the Austrian delegation about moving forward the consideration of item 120, he had no objection, since the financial reports were always the first to be considered. With regard to the comment by the Nigeria delegation concerning the overlapping between the work of CPC and that of the Committee, be said that the Bureau had recommended that the Committee should begin its substantive work during the week commencing 18 October and that there would be no overlapping between the work of the two bodies, since the Committee would adjust its work as required.

53. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was quite aware of the constraints imposed by the current situation. By way of example, the services available to ACABQ would permit it to hold only an average of five meetings per week for the three-week period beginning 18 October; in other words, it would be able to work only half tne time. For its part, the Committee would have facilities for only four, five or six meetings a week during several crucial weeks in November.

54. While the Committee could choose to conclude its work on the proposed programme budget by the end of the week of 13 to 17 December, the adoption of the draft resolutions would require at least three additional days. In that case, it would have to accept the consequences of its decision, namely that, once it commenced consideration of the proposed programme budget, it would be unable to consider other items. His delegation wished to reserve its position on the question of whether, by considering the proposed programme budget without the benefit of the recommendations of ACABQ, the Committee was not in

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contravention of certain rules. If the Committee decided to pursue that course of action, it would first have to determine which agenda items should be completed before 15 November and organize its programme of work accordingly. The question of appointments should be considered as early as possible and should not be deferred until the second half of the session. The Bureau could also consider setting a date for the submission of nominations.

55. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) pointed out that document A/C.5/48/L.1 made no mention of a report which had been requested on the procedure for the appointment of special representatives of the Secretary-General. He wondered whether that question would be dealt with under the item on the proposed programme budget or under agenda item 121. He also wished to know when the Secretariat proposed to issue the report.

56. While his delegation was not inflexible with regard to the date for the consideration of the item relating to appointments, it felt that a deadline should be set for the submission of nominations. With regard to the proposed programme budget, some delegations had proposed that the Committee should begin its consideration of that item without the benefit of the Advisory Committee's report. Such an approach, however, would give rise to some concern about the possible violation of the Charter or the Financial Rules, as had been correctly pointed out. His delegation could agree to the consideration of that item only in mid-November. It had also been suggested that the Committee should devote the second half of the current session to the consideration of the proposed programme budget, to the exclusion of all other items. That suggestion was difficult to accept since, the Committee would then forgo consideration of other important items on its agenda, such as the financing of peace-keeping operations.

57. His delegation could not endorse the tentative programme of work which had been submitted for the Committee's consideration and which required much more careful study.

58. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) pointed out that neither the various proposals made with a view to facilitating the Committee's work nor the holding of joint meetings in order to save time violated any of the provisions of the Charter. Even though it might not have the benefit of the Advisory Committee's recommendations, the Committee should nevertheless consider the various sections of the draft programme budget.

59. The CHAIRMAN, summing up the discussion, said that the exchange of views had been very useful and had helped to clarify the situation. The Committee was clearly faced with many difficulties, including difficulties regarding the timely publication of the documents relating to each agenda item. That was a key factor in establishing the programme of work and scheduling the meetings of CPC, since the date of the meetings of CPC required that the Committee delay its own work in order to avoid overlapping.

60. He pointed out that the programme of work submitted to the Committee was merely tentative because of the many uncertainties and constraints which the Committee faced. The Bureau had made every effort to identify those items to which the Committee was likely to be able to give early consideration.

61. Mr. RAE (India) inquired why the item concerning personnel questions was not included in the programme of work.

62. Mr. ACAKPO-SATCHIVI (Secretary of the Committee) recalled that, towards the end of its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly had adopted a resolution on the biennialization of the Committee's programme of work (resolution 46/220) and that the item referred to was not included in the agenda of the current session.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.